

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A contents retrieval system comprising:  
retrieval request receiving means for receiving a  
5 retrieval request of contents on a communication network  
from a user accessing through the communication network,  
and setting up processing conditions for retrieval  
processing in accordance with the retrieval request, and  
further issuing a reservation number of the retrieval  
10 processing and informing the user of the reservation number,  
and in addition applying the reservation number to the  
processing conditions and registering the same with a  
predetermined retrieval management table;  
contents retrieval means for retrieving the  
15 contents on the communication network in accordance with  
the processing conditions registered with said retrieval  
management table and storing the retrieval result, together  
with the reservation number, in a predetermined retrieval  
result storage file; and  
20 retrieval result providing means for retrieving a  
retrieval result associated with the reservation number  
from among the retrieval results stored in said retrieval  
result storage file, when an inquiry concerning the  
retrieval result is made from a user based on the  
25 reservation number, and providing the retrieval result for  
the user.

2. A contents retrieval system according to claim 1, wherein said retrieval request receiving means sets up as to whether there is a need to display a retrieval result as one of the processing conditions in form of a thumb-nail image, so that the set up result is registered with said retrieval management table, and

said contents retrieval means creates the thumb-nail image and stores the thumb-nail image in a predetermined image storage file in the event that the thumb-nail image is needed in accordance with the set up result as to whether there is a need to display the thumb-nail image registered with said retrieval management table.

3. A contents retrieval system according to claim 1, wherein said retrieval request receiving means sets up as to whether there is a need to inform a user by an electronic mail of the fact that a retrieval result is obtained at the time point when the retrieval result as one of the processing conditions is obtained by said contents retrieval means, so that the set up result is registered with said retrieval management table, and

said contents retrieval means 12 informs the user by an electronic mail of the fact that the retrieval result is obtained in the event that the thumb-nail image is needed in accordance with the set up result as to whether there is a need to inform the user by the electronic mail registered with said retrieval management table.

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4. A contents retrieval program storage medium storing a contents retrieval program for forming a contents retrieval system on a computer system, said contents retrieval system comprising:

retrieval request receiving means for receiving a retrieval request of contents on a communication network from a user accessing through the communication network, and setting up processing conditions for retrieval processing in accordance with the retrieval request, and further issuing a reservation number of the retrieval processing and informing the user of the reservation number, and in addition applying the reservation number to the processing conditions and registering the same with a predetermined retrieval management table;

contents retrieval means for retrieving the contents on the communication network in accordance with the processing conditions registered with said retrieval management table and storing the retrieval result, together with the reservation number, in a predetermined retrieval result storage file; and

retrieval result providing means for retrieving a retrieval result associated with the reservation number from among the retrieval results stored in said retrieval result storage file, when an inquiry concerning the retrieval result is made from a user based on the reservation number, and providing the retrieval result for

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the user.

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